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theology, that was Aristotle in all physical and speculative science."

"To the conspicuous cultivators of polite literature he was indebted for appearing in a purer text and in more accurate versions, nor was the criticism of the sixteenth century more employed on any other writer."

So we are not surprised to find in the Autobiography prefixed to the Diary of Mr. James Melville, who was sent to St. Andrews College in his fourteenth year: "I . . . enterit under the regenterie of . . . Mr. Wilyeam, who haide the estimation of the most solid and learnit in Aristotle's Philosophie." The works of Aristotle were his principal text books and in the third year of his course he takes "the fyve buikis of the Ethiks and the aught buikis of the Physiks."

Harrison, a writer of the times complains of the laziness of "rich mens sons" who "study little but histories and dice and trifles"; and we are told that in 1565 Elizabeth makes orations, at the Colleges, in classic tongues; "To the great comfort of all such as have been students there"; and Ascham says, that Edward VI. read the Ethics in Greek. Some indirect evidence of this devotion to Greek is given by Ben Jonson, whose characters when they wished to be fine pretend to Greek learning. Notice Clove in *Every Man out of His Humour*.

Since, then, we find the period of the highest popularity of Greek study in England to coincide with that of Character writings, and of popular discussions of Humours, as in Ben Jonson, may we not infer that the writers of that day sought to please a public taste which recognized no model but Aristotle by copying the lighter of the works attributed to him, bringing them up to date, if I may use the expression.

It is of interest to notice further that this style of writing went out of fashion at precisely the time when doubt and discredit were brought on Aristotle by physical discoveries. A new science and a new philosophy, represented to us by the names of Galileo, and Newton, Bacon, and Descartes, Harvey, and Kepler, arose, and interest in Greek learning wanes first when the Character writings are fewer and fewer and the allusions to Humours more difficult to find.

The idea of humours was not confined to England; the term itself is used, for instance, in the introductions prefixed to the plays in earlier editions of Molière. (They sound indeed much as if written for Ben Jonson's plays.) Rabelais uses the word in the title of a short poem. La Bruyère (1639-1696) translated the *Ἠθικὰ χαρακτῆρες* of Theophrastus and wrote Characters of his own.

A careful examination of the literature of France and Germany for this period would probably show a rise and fall of Character and Humour writing commensurate with that in England, and would add to the evidence as to the source of a fashion which, though apparently a trifling thing, brings us into immediate touch with the great Renaissance movement.

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#### THE VERB IN THE "MORTE D'ARTHUR."\*

PROFESSOR HEMPL, in his article on my *Inflections and Syntax of Malory's Morte d'Arthur*, has printed from Doctor Norton's unpublished verb-lists several valuable corrections of my own lists. He adds some questions which the present paper aims to answer. It should be said, however, that citations are given in my grammar, (1) for rare forms, (2) to show which of two parallel forms is the more common. Further citation seemed unnecessary and cumbrous. The following notes proceed in the order of Professor Hempl's article.

##### REDUPLICATING VERBS, §133.

*drede*. The double forms for the preterit of this verb are cited among weak verbs at §163. This is the rule wherever a verb was found to have passed over entirely to the weak conjugation. For this reason the verbs *bowe*, *flee*, *lese*, *lye* (to speak falsely), *shote*, cited by Doctor Norton, are omitted from Class ii, and *brenne* from Class iii. And since these verbs except in sporadic forms, were weak even in Chaucer, they are not mentioned at §153.

##### THE WEAK VERBS, §§162, *seq.*

*causeth*, 344, 35 may be plural, (cf. Chaucer

\*See MOD. LANG. NOTES, vol. ix, p. 479.

*House of Fame*, i. 35) or it may be a case of anacoluthon due to the interposition of the singular noun *Launcelot*, or to the taking of the whole preceding phrase as a clause.

*dare*, 192.34, is subjunctive, as always in conditional sentences. *Darest* would be ungrammatical.

#### THE STRONG VERBS.

##### CLASS I, §135.

2 *strade*, in *bestrade*, 860.6.

2 *droofe*, 700.18, occurs also at 179.12. The commoner form *drofe* occurs at 156.3, 193.17, 691.11, 695.3, 710.3, etc.

3 *wreton*, 614.2, has an ending not found elsewhere. A typographical error is to be suspected.

##### CLASS II, §137.

2 *chosen*, 663.20. The plural *-en* is discussed, in its place, at §187.

2 *clafe*, 693.21, is the common form: 197.22, 198.23, 199.5.9, 220.25, etc. [*Clefte*] occurs at 174.1.

2 *flay*, 689.13. I confess that I doubted this preterit because of the curious sense it seemed to make: and [he] *putte a spere forth, and smote the fyrste that he flay to the erthe*. Taking the *that*-clause as adjective instead of consecutive, it was easy to suppose *slay* by a printer's error of *f* for long *s*. The meaning then would be 'the first that he hit.' But a preterit *slay* was as difficult as a preterit *flay*, Malory's forms being *slawe* (*slough*) and *flewe*. Halliwell (*Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*), indeed, prints a Chaucerian preterit *flaie*, but gives no citations. That Malory's *flay* is, however, from (*flye*) seems to be proved by the following from Halliwell, under *fley* (a common Chaucerian preterit):

"Grete strokys the yeant gafe,  
And to the erthe flay his stafte."

MS. Cantab. ff. ii, 38, f. 64.

Will some one give me information concerning this poem, and at the same time, perhaps, cite a Chaucerian preterit *flay*?

##### CLASS III, §141.

1 *flynge*, 589.31; 2 *flang*, pl., 192.1.

2 *swange*, 294.21, cited in foot-note to p. 40.

3 *wonne*, 193.5, 231.6, 235.1, 134.13.

##### CLASS IV, §147.

2 *bere*, 713.24.

*broke*, 258.28, is not preterit, but participle.

2 *come*, 270.28, 699.1.

2 *ware*, 468.27, occurs also 851.31.

##### CLASS V, §149.

2 *yaf*. Doctor Norton seems to be right in his assumption that this occurs only in *foryaf*, 43.32.

2 *saw*. 204.35.

##### CLASS VI, §150.

2 *forsoke*, 212.13; 3 *forsaken*, 854.38.

2 *shoke*, 694.35, 849.19.

2 *wasshe*, pl., 550.19, cited in foot-note.

2 *wake*, in (*a*)*wake*, 848.9.

Citations for the presents *shyne* (i.), *rynge*, *stynge* (iii.), *forsake*, *shake*, *wasshe* (vi.), I have not with me at present. But these are the less important as being, with the single exception of *wasshe*, sufficiently vouched for by other verbs of their respective classes.

It remains for me to thank both Professor Hempl and Doctor Norton.

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#### ON THE ORIGIN OF *i* AND *ū* IN AORIST-PRESENTS IN GER- MANIC.

IN an article in PBB. xviii, 522 ff., Hirt seeks to explain the *i* and *ū* in aorist-presents as due to the disappearance of a nasal. He gives the following instances:

1. O.E. *belife*, O.H.G. *belibu*: Skt. *lim-pāmi*, Lith. *līmpū*.
2. Goth. *fra-weiþip*: Skt. *vindāti*.
3. O.E. *sniweð*: Lat. *ninguit*, Lith. *sninga*.
4. O.E. *smūgan*; Lith. *smunkū*.
5. O.E. *pūte*: Skt. *tundāte*, Lat. *tundit*.
6. W.G. *wigan*: Lat. *vincō*.
7. O. E., O.H.G. *sigan*: Skt. *siñcāti*.

Now as these aorist-presents all belong to the *ei*- and *eu*-series, and correspond to forms in allied languages with a short vowel or a nasal-infix, he assumes that in these series, *in* and *un* > *i* and *ū* > *i* and *ū*.

No reason can be given why, in an unaccented syllable, Germ. *inx* < *enx*, or *unx* <